

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A Method for the production of a ~~N-terminal four~~
~~kringle-containing fragment of hepatocyte growth factor (NK4)~~ comprising:

- _____ (a) ~~by expressing~~ of a nucleic acid encoding said NK4 in a microbial host cell,
- _____ (b) ~~isolating of~~ inclusion bodies containing of said NK4 in denatured form,
- _____ (c) ~~solubilizing~~ of the inclusion bodies at a pH of 7-9 in a phosphate buffered
solution, and
- _____ (d) ~~renaturing~~ of the denatured NK4, ~~characterized in that solubilization and~~
~~naturation are performed at a pH of 7-9 in a phosphate buffered solution.~~

2. (Currently amended) A Method according to claim 1, wherein, after
renaturating, the NK4 is dialyzed with phosphate buffer at pH 7-9 for at least 24
hours.

3. (Currently amended) A Method according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized
wherein that NK4 is purified after renaturation by hydrophobic interaction
chromatography in the presence of a phosphate buffer at pH 7-9.

4. (Currently amended) A Method according to claim 3, characterized wherein
that chromatography is performed on butyl sepharose[-] or phenyl sepharose.

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5. (Currently amended) A Mmethod according to ~~any one of~~ claims 1 to 4, characterized wherein ~~that~~ the amount of GSH-modified NK4 is between 0% and 50% of the total amount of NK4.

6. (Currently amended) A Mmethod according to claim 5, characterized wherein ~~that~~ the amount of GSH- modified NK4 is between 0% and 20% of the total amount of NK4.